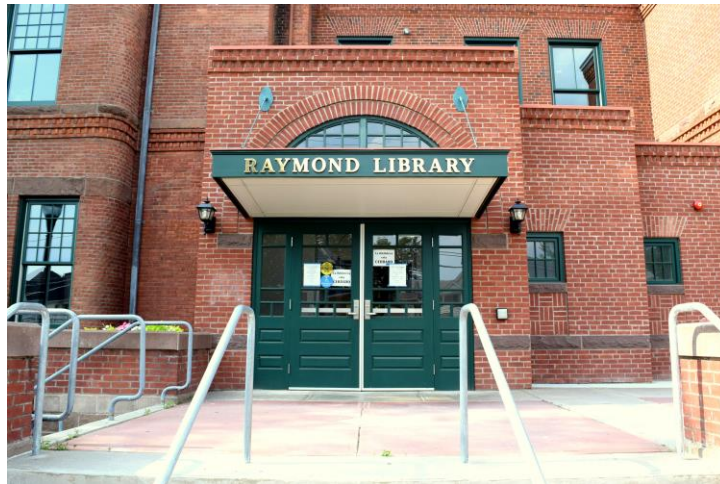




For Immediate Release

Contact: Eli Freund
Town of East Hartford
860-291-7202
efreund@easthartfordct.gov

Newly Expanded and Renovated Raymond Library to Open to Public on September 8



(August 27, 2015) **East Hartford, CT** – With residents patiently waiting for the past year and a half, Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc is proud to announce that Raymond Library will be opening its doors to the general public beginning on September 8th at 9 a.m.

When patrons cross through the library threshold, they will experience a building that has gone through a \$9 million full-scale renovation and a 14,000 square-foot expansion, with amenities to fit every age group.

“Thank you to the residents of East Hartford for waiting patiently throughout this whole process,” Mayor Leclerc said. “We have been working diligently since groundbreaking to make sure this library will remain not only a hub of activity for all who enter, but also a gold-standard for libraries across the State of Connecticut.”

Mayor Leclerc, who championed the effort to find the crucial funding, eventually procured the necessary \$4 million in bonding from the state to allow the newly expanded project to go forward, with help from the local state delegation and Gov. Dannel P. Malloy. The project also encompassed \$3.8 million in town bonding and local revenue sources, as well as nearly \$1 million from private donations.

With help from those sources, Mayor Leclerc was able to work interdepartmentally to offer a library that contains a Creative Commons space, with 3D printers, as well as a newly expanded teen space, with booths and a large children’s section, which was tripled in size, with multiple “early literacy stations,” holding thousands of educational games aimed at teaching and improving math, science and language skills. In addition, the library will offer multiple pieces of technology and equipment to accommodate the vision impaired, as well as the handicapped population; a rare books room on the second floor; Museum pieces and artifacts displayed throughout the library, as well as a beautiful “Butterfly Garden” next to the Main Street entrance of the library and many more amenities.

Beginning on September 8, Wickham Library will return to normal hours, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. after offering extended hours over the past few months. Programming at the library will also remain limited until the library’s official grand opening, occurring at the end of September, in which there will be activities, speeches, food and a ribbon cutting to commemorate the official grand opening to the public. Small repairs will still be ongoing until that ceremony as well.

On September 8, Raymond Library will assume its previous hours of operation, before its closing: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and closed on Sundays.

For more information on the opening of the libraries and the services offered starting September 8, please contact the Library Department at 860-528-4664.